



# SAMPLE MEDIA ADVISORY

## MEDIA OUTREACH

### WRITING AND DISTRIBUTING A MEDIA ADVISORY

A media advisory is a simple way to inform local media outlets about an upcoming press conference, briefing, or other event. You distribute this document to media in advance of your event to provide print, broadcast, and Internet reporters with the basic details about what your event is and where and when it will be held. Its goal is not to tell the complete story, but instead to entice media to attend your event to learn more.

#### Writing a Media Advisory

As you prepare for your **National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month)** event, refer to the customizable media advisory template at the end of this fact sheet. You may use this template as the basis of your media advisory, making sure to edit it as necessary (particularly updating all placeholders that have been highlighted in bold and listed in brackets throughout the advisory) to customize it for your event. Electronic versions of these materials and other templates are available on the CD-ROM included in this planning toolkit, as well as on the **Recovery Month** Web site at [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov).

If you choose to write your own media advisory, keep it short (no more than a page). The most essential components are the details of the event: what the event is, where the event is taking place, and the day and time the event will begin. A contact name and number that media can call in advance of the event also are crucial.

#### Distributing a Media Advisory

Below are some suggestions for successfully distributing your advisory.

**Place it on the “daybooks” and in “week-ahead” columns.** “Daybooks” are daily listings of all activities that media are invited to attend – they are not read by the general public. In contrast, “week-ahead” columns reach a wider audience because they are published in local newspapers and business publications. Both of these tools can help you spread the word about your event.

Call the local bureaus of newswire services, such as the Associated Press and Reuters, in your city or state and ask for the name of the daybook editor and that person’s fax number. Fax your advisory and ask the daybook editor to place it on the newswire’s “daybook” the week before, the day before, and the day of the event. (Some media services, such as PR Newswire, charge for posting such information, so you may wish to inquire first.) Also call local newspapers and business publications that feature upcoming activities, asking them to place the advisory in their “week-ahead” columns or calendar listings to encourage community members to attend your event.

15TH ANNUAL

National Alcohol  
& Drug Addiction  
*Recovery Month*

SEPTEMBER 2004



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**Create a media list.** Send the advisory to local media outlets in your community one week before your event. To do so, you should develop a current media list—a fundamental tool that organizes information about reporters. Your list of media outlets must be accurate and up to date to effectively reach reporters with your story. This list also can be used when distributing your press release, which will contain more information about your event.

Here are some tips on creating a media list:

- Check your local library or bookstore for media directories of daily and weekly newspapers, television stations, radio stations, newswire services, Internet news outlets, magazines, newsletters, and business trade publications in your community. Some examples of media directories include Bacon's directories, the *Yellow Book*, and Gebbie's *All-In-One Directory*. Use the phone book or the Internet to supplement your list.
- Once you have developed a list of phone numbers and addresses, call each outlet to verify the information and to determine which editors and reporters are the most appropriate for your news, such as health reporters.
- For each media outlet, create a list with the following information: name of media outlet, address, telephone number, fax number, and the names and titles of specific reporters or editors who cover alcohol or drug use disorder treatment and health-related issues. Today, most reporters and editors prefer information to be e-mailed to them; therefore, secure an e-mail address when possible. When calling to verify contact information, you also should ask about the best time to call each reporter about your event (i.e., how far in advance/what time of day).
- Be sure to include specialized media on your list, such as African-American, Hispanic/Latino, or other minority newspapers or radio stations. Other specialized media you may wish to include are university/college newspapers; television and radio stations; small community papers or neighborhood newsletters; and publications produced by local organizations, such as businesses, hospitals, women's centers, health care clinics, professional associations, churches and other faith-based institutions, drug stores, and local civic clubs.

**Follow up.** After you e-mail or fax the media advisory, contact reporters by phone to determine their interest in attending or covering the event. This type of personal effort often can make a difference in generating media interest.

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You are encouraged to share your plans and activities for *Recovery Month 2004* with SAMHSA's Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, your colleagues, and the general public by posting them on the official *Recovery Month* Web site at [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov).

We would like to know about your outreach efforts and community success stories during *Recovery Month*. Please complete the Customer Satisfaction Form enclosed in the kit. Directions are included on the form.

Please send any of your organization's *Recovery Month* promotional samples to:  
Office of the Director, Consumer Affairs, Center for Substance Abuse Treatment, SAMHSA, 5600 Fishers Lane, Rockwall Building II, Rockville, MD 20857.

For additional *Recovery Month* materials, visit our Web site at [www.recoverymonth.gov](http://www.recoverymonth.gov) or call 1-800-662-HELP.

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[Date]

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### Community Forum to Discuss [Community]'s Need for Better Drug and Alcohol Treatment Services

#### An Estimated [Number] People Go Untreated Because of Barriers to Treatment

An estimated [number] people in [community] have alcohol and drug use disorders, yet many of them cannot access the treatment they need. A community forum on [when] featuring [names of one or two particularly prominent community leaders/participants] will address this issue and discuss how to solve it. The forum is part of the 15<sup>th</sup> annual observance of **National Alcohol and Drug Addiction Recovery Month (Recovery Month)**, a nationwide celebration of those in recovery from alcohol and drug use disorders.

[Community]'s problem is part of a national issue: in 2002, nearly 23 million people, or 9.7 percent of the total population, needed treatment for an alcohol or illicit drug problem. Yet only 10.3 percent of those who needed treatment actually received it.

Forum participants will discuss what can be done immediately to improve the local situation—acting in conjunction with the national **Recovery Month** theme, *"Join the Voices for Recovery... Now!"*

WHO: [participants]

WHEN: [date and time]

WHERE: [address of location]

CONTACT: [name and phone number of primary contact for event]

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